

H 211 J Whitehead

MANIFESTATION

TRUTH



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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Concerning the Scriptures, and concerning the Word, Light, and Spirit within. 2. Concerning trial of Spirits. 3. Concerning Perfection. 4. Concerning Salvation by Christ. 5. Concerning Swearing. 6. Concerning the Worship of God, and why we separate from those that worship in | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Temples made with hands. 7. Concerning Ministers and Maintenance. 8. Concerning womens speaking in the Church. 9. Concerning Superiours and Inferiours, and the honour that is due from the one to the other, wherein something is said concerning Titles, Courtesies, and Salutation by the highway. |
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WRIT IN

ANSWER

To a BOOK which a Nameless Author hath written against the People called

QUAKERS

WHEREIN

Is contained divers Untruths and hard Speeches, tending to beget jealousies and evil thoughts of them, (who are known to be Harmless and Innocent) in the Authors Tenants and Neighbours, to whom he hath sent this Book, which is here detected, and the Innocency of Gods servants cleared: Also the Truth of those things which they believe and practice in these particulars aforesaid is declared.

K By John Whitehead, who hath no pleasure in stirring up strife and contention about things of this nature; And therefore hath laboured rather to manifest the Truth to the unbiassed Reader, than particularly to traduce his Adversary, desiring that he and those to whom he directed his Book, may have a sight of this, if peradventure it may be instrumental to remove from them all prejudice, that they may receive the naked Truth, as it is in Jesus.

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Friendly Reader,

I Have lately received in manuscript a small Book, which in the fear of the Lord I have read over, and seriously pondered, which I was the more induced to, because I had some ground to suspect, (if not to conclude) that it was writ by *Lord Say*, who hath been famous for the profession that he hath made of Christianity: And therefore I should
 Isa. 29. 14. admire, but that I know the pleasure of the Lord is to confound the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent, from whom he hides that which he reveals to babes, that no flesh might glory in his sight: I say, but that I know and do consider these things, I should admire, that he (who hath read
 Mat. 11. 25. the Scriptures, and so long professed Christ, who said that men would say all manner of evil of his blessed and peculiar people) should be so far degenerated, both from Christian Charity and true Nobility, as to harbour so many evil thoughts and groundless jealousies of an Innocent harmless people; and my soul mourns, that he is so far given up to believe lies, and report such palpable untruths against us; amongst which I shall only instance these few, as none of the least, *viz.* That *George Fox* desired a Gentlewoman to wear a Bracelet for his sake, and thereby enchanted her to follow him, from which *George Fox* hath approved himself innocent as a child, and so shall I ever look upon him, till the spreaders of that slander bring forth their Author: That *James Nailor* made himself, or said of himself that he was Christ, is another lie; though it be true, that some foolish women (which both he and we re-proved) said so of him; And it hath often been proved and printed to the shame of the first raisers of that slander, that he never said of himself, that he was as holy, just and good as God: Therefore till the contrary be made manifest by some known Author, we must conclude that another lie: A fourth is,

That Jesuites and Priests are known to mingle themselves amongst us, and be our Teachers and Instructors; which thing I know to be false; and the grievous sufferings of divers of my dear friends for testifying against their bloody persecuting principles, and Idolatrous worship, may sufficiently evince that we mingle not with them, nor they with us; And my hearts desire is, that *English* men might beware, lest while they look for Jesuites and Popish Priests amongst us, they be not led by them themselves into such snares

as they cannot easily break; and till the parties be named which see one of our friends go with a rope about his middle to hang a Minister, I shall conclude that another lie, because I know it is contrary to our very nature and principle, who are born from above, which is to save mens lives and not to destroy; as also all whoredom and uncleanness is an abomination to us; therefore do we both warn and testify against the practisers of it, which is sufficient to demonstrate, that he who solicites to filthiness, and she who said she was commanded of the Father to go to bed to a man (being none of her husband) if any such there were) are not of us, therefore do I conclude those reports slanderous. Divers other hard speeches and groundless suggestions I find, which I shall not particularize, being satisfied they are not grounded upon any just cause given by us either in doctrine or practice; also hoping that the Author may be sensible by this time (wherein truth is risen above slanders) that he hath overshot himself in writing such grievous things against us, whom I am perswaded he doth not fully know; and therefore I cannot wonder if he do persecute, which yet I will not positively affirm, though I do certainly know that his principle leads to it, which saith, that a Blasphemer may justly be put to death in Gospel times; though Christ Jesus, who is far more excellent then *Moses*, gave no such command, but rather held forth the contrary in the whole course of his doctrine and practice: But if he with whom I now deal have had his hand against any, which for conscience sake could not respect his person, so as to imprison their persons or spoil their goods for things done in obedience to the Light of Christ in their consciences, though contrary to his judgement, that will be found in Gods day persecuting their persons, under the pretence of persecuting the Devil and their sin, which narrow cover the most bloody persecutors ever had; but howsoever, this I say and do desire that he may know it if he be yet alive, that he is at least guilty of their sin, who said, Come let us smite him with the tongue, report ye, and we will report it; But surely, the Lord sees how we are set as a mark for every one to shoot at, and I am perswaded that when he hath fully tryed us, he will rowl away the reproach from us for ever; And their eyes that wait to see us humble and fall into foul enormities (as divers professors (but not professors of the same Life) have done) shall certainly fail; for hitherto hath the Lord helped us and blessed us, and made us to stand in the sufficiency of his grace in the

Read
Mat. 13.

Jer. 10. 10.

I. a. 25. 8.

the fight of our enemies, and I know that his presence is yet with us, and we are of him, and not of that Spirit that they were of at *Munster*, who followed *John of Leyden* and thought to build up *Sion* with blood and beat down its enemies with carnal weapons, for though they might pretend to be led by the Spirit within them, we know that that which led them into uproars, war and bloodshed, was not the Spirit of Christ which leads us, for it teaches us to love our enemies and to save mens lives and not to destroy.

And for the corrupt principles and practises of those called Ranters, we have given testimony against them, which all that have heard and duly weighed in that Spirit that tries all things, can witness that we are as far from them as light from darkness; but whereunto shall I liken the men of this generation? for when the Spirit of Christ doth so work in the hearts of any that they cannot run with the world into rioting and excess, then presently they will call it Belzebub, or the Devil transformed into an Angel of
 Mat. 10. 25. Light, as the Pharisees did unto Christ in the dayes of his flesh; and if they called the Master of the house Belzebub, no wonder if it be more done to them of his household. But as for self-mortification, voluntary humility, and will worship, whereof we are accused, we know it avails not; but those which do by the Spirit mortifie the deeds of the flesh, shall finde comfort in so doing, and an humble heart, with a broken and contrite Spirit which
 Isa. 57. 15. doth fear God and tremble at his Word, however that be reproached as one of the Devils tricks; yet such a one God delights to teach and dwell in; and we with whom his Tabernacle is, do
 Ch. 66. 2. not worship in our wills, but in Spirit and Truth; neither do we say that it is a perfect demonstration of humility to cast away band-strings, lace and ribbons, though we believe it a duty incumbent upon us to abstain from wearing things superfluous and unserviceable; and also from all excess in meats and drinks, though we know the Kingdom of God stands not therein, yet we
 1 Tim. 2. 9. desire to be found temperate and in modest apparel, according to the good example of the ancient Christians.

And further I do observe how the Author of that writing with which I now deal, hath often misrepresented our doctrines and practises, as further may appear by a serious view of his, and what follows, whereby I perceive he doth not rightly understand us, and I am perswaded did never regularly try our Spirits, either by a sober hearing of our doctrines declared by our own mouths and pens

pens, or by his own view of our practises, but hath heard and believed what evil and prejudiced men have maliciously printed and said against us on purpose to slander and render us odious. Therefore in answer to what is said against us, I shall labour rather (for the stopping of slanders and to prevent misconstructions) to inform the Reader of the Truth of those doctrines which we do believe and practice, then particularly to traduce the Author with whom I have to deal, though in many things more I might shew wherein he hath wronged us and given unsound constructions both of Scripture and our doctrines and practises.

Concerning the Scriptures, and concerning the Word, Spirit, and Light within.

Concerning the Scriptures, I say we do not slight them nor cast them off as a dead Letter, Paper and Ink, but own them which Moses and the Prophets, Evangelists and Apostles did write or speak forth as they were moved by the Spirit of God, (so far as they are free from false transcription and corrupt translation) to be the very words and true sayings of God, and therefore not to be slighted, but read, believed, and practised by every true Christian; but they that are unlearned of Christ, whose hearts are not established by the grace of God do pervert or wrest the Scriptures out of their right place to their own destruction, not rightly distinguishing betwixt the Law and Gospel times, nor betwixt that which was abolished for the unprofitableness thereof, and that which God hath established for ever; and therefore we do direct all to that Word of God which was in the beginning before the Scriptures were written, of which the Scriptures testify that it is Life, and is the Light of men, that shines in darkness, even in mens dark hearts, shewing the grossness and corruption of their hearts; I say, this Word which was and is God the Saviour of all them that believe, who searcheth all hearts and incomprehensibly dwells in his Kingdom that is in man, and doth reprove man for his unbelief and evil deeds, we do direct all to wait to know this ingrafted Word and hearken to it, that they may not be unlearned but all taught of the Lord that Spirit, which holy men of God knew and did believe in, and was moved or led by, before the Scriptures were written; that so by this Interpreter one of a thousand people may have the Scriptures opened, and feel the power of God,

2 Pe. 3.
10.

Read Joh.
the first.

Luke 17.
20, 21.

Jam. 1. 21.

and have faith in the povver and live in the life that the Primitive Christians lived in; and thus to direct people to the Word, Spirit, or Light of God vvithin, is none of the Devils vvork (as he saith) but the vvork of Christs ancient Ministers; neither doth it make
 17, 18. void the Scriptures, but establissheth them in their right place as a
 19. true Declaration: and the Lord Jesus Christ vvho is that quick-
 20. ning Spirit (vvhich doth enlighten every man that cometh into
 21. the vvorld) in his right place as the foundation vvhich unto all
 22. generations standeth sure; neither can our directing people to this
 23. foundation (Christ the Light vvhich enlightens their consciences)
 24. have such bad effects as to lay them open to all base lusts, error
 25. and delusion, for all those things are condemned vvith the Light,
 26. and they that believe and do such things go from, and against the
 27. Light in their ovvn consciences.

Concerning the tryal of Spirits.

I say the Apostle gave forth no such command, as that we should try the Spirit of God by the Scriptures, for it is most absurd to try the superior by the inferior; and no man can rightly understand the Scripture nor discern Spirits whether they be of God or no, but by the Light of the Spirit of God vvithin, Therefore are they
 14. worthily reprov'd who presume by strength of reason, sharpness of wit and humane learning, both to judge of the Scripture and of the Spirit of God and its movings in men, as the Scribes, Pharisees and chief Priests did, who in their pride and self-wit sate as Judges of the Law in the letter, and thereby condemned Christ the Prince of Life, and also his blessed Martyr Stephen, as blasphemers that were not worthy to live; and this was the fruit of trying the Spirit by the Scripture when mans wisdom sate as Judge of both, which is rather to be judged by them both; and let such as know no other rule whereby to try Spirits but the Scriptures, confess that they are ignorant of the Law written in the heart, and of the testimony of Jesus, which is the Spirit or Word of Prophecie that is near in the heart even the more sure Word, surer then the words of the Prophets or Apostles, which may be wrested; for it is a Light in a dark place (*viz.* the heart) to give man a true understanding of their words; and his Law that is vvritten there, is perfect and unalterable; and by this rule holy men of God try'd Spirits before the Scriptures were vvritten, and so all the Spirits that

Note,
 That we
 own the
 Scriptures
 to be a
 rule, but
 not the
 only rule
 whereby
 to try
 Spirits.

that are gone out into the world may be tryed, and those that are contrary to it are also contrary to the Scriptures rightly understood, and therefore under the judgement of both; but the Spirit of God judgeth all things, but ought to be judged of no man; therefore sad will be their accompt that call it the Devil, and its motions, his impulses; for all sins and blasphemies against the son of man may be forgiven, but the blasphemy against the holy Spirit shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in that to come.

2 Pet. 1. 19

Mat. 12.

3¹, 32

Concerning Perfection.

We say first, that we have sinned and God hath let us see it, and we have confessed it, and he hath forgiven it through the blood of Christ which doth wash and cleanse us from it, and by his power we are kept from sinning; yet do we not boast of perfection in our selves, because by the grace of God we are what we are: howbeit we know that it is the Commandment of Christ that we should be perfect even as our Heavenly Father is perfect; and therefore we are perswaded it is not impossible for us to be so whilst here in this life, for he is not such an hard Master to command impossibilities: and moreover, by one offering he hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified; and we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus once for all, therefore perfected for ever: and this was, and is the very end for which he sends forth his Ministers, even to gather the Saints into the unity of the Faith, to a perfect man in the measure, fulness and stature of Christ, who even for this purpose was manifest, to take away sin and destroy the works of the Devil; but if any will yet say, that cannot be whilst here in this life for, some sin will remain in men whilst on this side the grave, let them answer me these questions. 1. Whether they believe that any shall enter in, to inherit Gods Kingdom? and if yea, then whether they believe that they shall enter into it with some sin in them? and if nay, then in what time and place shall they be cleansed, and their sin perfectly done away, seeing they deny it to be possible whilst in this life? but we affirm it, being perswaded that there is no purgatory wherein to be cleansed after death, and knowing that Christ Jesus is able to save to the uttermost, they that come to God by him; so that those that are born of God and abide in Christ, sin not, neither can because they are born of God, and his seed remains in them; contrary to which text no interpretation

Joh. 1. 7.

Mat. 5. 48.

Heb. 10.
10; 14.Eph. 4. 11;
12, 13Joh. 3. 5;
to 11.

Heb. 10. 25

tation of it, or argument can stand good; but herein are the children of God and the children of the Devil made manifest; he that doth righteousness is of God, but he that sinneth is of the Devil; who sinneth from the beginning: and this doctrine doth not tend to Ranting, as they that understand it not, say; but to encourage people to wait to be cleansed and kept by the mighty power of God from all unrighteousness, which is all sin, and press on to perfection in the Life of Christ.

Concerning Salvation by Christ.

We say and believe, that without the sufferings and death of Christ at *Jerusalem*, no man can be saved; justified or sanctified, and therefore do they maliciously or (at least) ignorantly slander us, who say we expect not to be saved by Christs sufferings at *Jerusalem*, but by Christs sufferings in us; for such words did never proceed from us, though we say, that it is not an historical knowledge and belief of what Christ said and suffered at *Jerusalem* sixteen hundred years ago, that can or doth save any man without feeling of his Spirit, Power and Life made manifest within, to make them conformable to him in his death, and raise them together with him to live in the vertue of his life, by which life we as well as the ancient Christians are saved, and we are justified, sanctified in the Name and by the Spirit of our God which mightily worketh in us, and all his works are perfect; and therefore I do distinguish betwixt the righteousness which is of faith, which the Spirit worketh, and the righteousness which is of the Law performed by mans own strength; for though the one be as filthy rags, yet so is not the other; therefore is he the enemy of all righteousness that mingles them both together, and treads them under foot as dung and dross; therefore let all that love their souls, love Christ the righteousness of God and follow after him, that they may be made righteous, and have that boldness in the day of judgement which the ancient Christians had, because (said they) as he is, so are we in this world.

¹Joh 4.17

Concerning Swearing.

To swear at all in Gospel times, is no part of Gods worship; therefore it is no delusion but the truth that makes us refuse to swear in any case.

For though swearing was used in the time of deaths reign from
Adam

Adam to Moses, and that by some of Gods people; and not only so, but commanded in some particular cases by Moses and the Prophets in the time of the Law; yet a greater Prophet being raised, to whom they all gave witness and command that in all things he should be heard, with this severe penalty, that every soul that would not hear him should be cut off from his people; And seeing Christ Jesus that Prophet which they said God would raise, hath found that Covenant faulty in which oaths were used, and by his own mouth expressly hath commanded us not to swear at all; though in old time it was lawful and an honour to God to swear in some cases, yet now it is not lawful, or an honour to God to swear in any case, because Christ Jesus the great Law-giver, in the New Testament hath by plain and expresse precept wholly forbidden it, against which precept no argument, conclusion or interpretation, whether of Council, Synod or private man, is good; though grounded upon the Law of Moses, the words of the Prophets, or practice of Gods Servants, Saints or Angels, for their words and practises are to be reduced to an harmony with his, and not his to theirs, he being given to be head over all things to his Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all, and therefore cannot the example of Saints or Angels, and much less the practice of men in this, justifie us in the breach of his command, had we no other ground for our denial to swear; but to swear at all is against the Law of the Spirit of Truth that dwelleth in us, and derogates from the glory of his verity who hath made our yea, yea, and our nay, nay, in all things; but the Apostle James who writ to the twelve Tribes scattered abroad, as if he had foreseen that, because of former precepts and customs they would have stood to justifie some swearing contrary to Christs command, was very positive, and expressly did forbid it; above or before all things, saith he, my brethren swear not, neither by heaven, nor by earth (Mark) nor any other oath, but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay, lest ye fall into condemnation; Therefore we cannot swear by heaven nor the things therein, nor by earth nor the things therein, nor by any other oath, though by such Christians as be in the Apostacy from the Spirit and Life of Christ, it be accounted lawful; for if we did swear at all, we should justly fall with them into the same condemnation.

Acts 3. 22,

23, 24.

Mat. 5. 34.

Jam. 5. 12.

Concerning the worship of God, and why we separate from them that worship in Temples made with hands,

First, Because we do thus believe and declare, that God is a Spirit and dwells not in Temples made with hands, neither is rightly worshipped there, and therefore we cannot joyn with them in worship, that be erred from the Spirit and from the Truth, and do in their wills worship in vain, having their fear towards God taught by mens precepts, and their worship consists not of Gods Ordinances, but in divers observations, inventions and traditions, which are not the Commandments of the Lord from heaven, but rather a loathing to his soul and a grief to his spirit, because in matter and manner they are contrary to the Primitive Christians worship; For first, they did not sprinkle Infants, and call that baptisme into the Church, that we can finde in the Scripture, nor in History, for near the first three hundred years, neither was it a part of their worship to sing *Dauids* Psalms in rime and meeter, as in these dayes men do, which are far enough from the condition that *David* was in when he gave forth the Psalms; and besides, the Ministers that were allowed among the Primitive Christians did not read Prayers for money, nor study Sermons to last an hour and preach them for money; neither did the Primitive Christians love to have it so, as the titular Christians now do; who by their divisions, envying and persecuting about worship do make it manifest, that they are neither in the same Spirit nor worship in the same manner as the Primitive Christians did, and therefore we separate from them which we have sufficient ground to do, though they had the very form of godliness, which yet they have not, seeing they are out of the power which should crucifie them to the world, and the world to them; and are conformed like to the world, and for the generality of them do live in sensual lusts, if not in open Prophaneness; but although we cannot for conscience sake joyn with them in their worship, because we do in heart believe it is not right; yet do we not (as he saith) cast off all worship and Ordinances of God; for we are sought out by the Father to worship him in Spirit and in Truth, where we have found acceptance with God at what time soever, and wheresoever we have been gathered together to wait upon him, whether by day or in the evening, as the true Christians were when

Acts 7.48
Chap. 17.
24, 25.

Mt. 15.

Read If 2.

2 Cor. 6.
17, 18.

2 Tim 3.5.

Joh 21. to
the 24.

when *Paul* continued his speech till midnight; and sometimes we meet in a believers house, upper-chamber, field or barn, as the ancient Christians did, who were gathered out of the world, and separated from the Jews worldly Sanctuary, and Heathens Temples, and yet were not of those that did creep into houses, and separate themselves, sensual, not having the Spirit, no more then we are, though by such as accused them and persecuted them, we have all manner of evil said against us falsely, and are persecuted as they were, because for conscience sake we cannot forsake the assembling of our selves together as the manner of some is, but must meet together in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that we may enjoy his presence, and comfort and edifie one another in love.

Acts. 20.
7, 8.

Heb. 10. 25
Mat. 18. 20

Concerning Ministers and maintenance.

We do say, how shall they preach and declare unto us the minde of God, except they be chosen and sent of God? and therefore we do deny to hear such as run, and are not sent of God, but for lucre and honours sake take upon them to Preach and speak of those things which by wisdom, humane learning, and natural parts they can never understand, but do darken counsel by words without knowledge; for the generality of them say, that revelation is ceased and that they have no vision in these dayes; therefore we wonder not that they and their people are so ignorant of God, for none knows the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son reveals him; neither do we wonder why so many perish for want of true knowledge (though we greatly pity to see it so) for we know that when the Teachers have no vision (as by their own confession they have not) the people perish; therefore we dare not trust our souls with them, though people that have itching ears do chule them for their Pastors; or such Bishops as exercise Lordship and Domination over peoples consciences, impose them upon us; for the Lord Jesus Christ is the Bishop of our souls, and he hath given us Pastors according to his own heart, that feed us with knowlledge and understanding, and leads us to living springs, and a fould of self, and them vve do dearly ovvn and esteem for their vworks sake that be Christs true Ministers vvhom he hath sent, and doth furnish, and enable by the gift of his Spirit, for the vwork of the Ministry, vwho freely vwithout money or price have received the vvord of reconciliation and do freely preach it, coveting no mans silver or his

Rom. 10.
14, 15.

1 Pet. 5. 2, 3
Job 38. 2.

Mat. 11. 27

Prov. 29.
18.

1 Pet. 2. 15.
J. 1. 3. 15.

Mat. 10. 8,
9, 10.

gold, nor his corn, nor his hay, nor his wool, nor his Lamb, but do cast their whole care upon the Lord that hath sent them; and do plow in hope, plant in hope, and thresh in hope, that the ground may be broken up that hath brought forth briars and thorns, and the true seed grow to a blade, an ear and corn in the ear, and then be separated from the chaff; and such as these shall never be frustrate of their hope, nor want necessary things pertaining to this life, though they know not to day what they shall have to morrow; I know that they that preach the Gospel shall never want a livelihood: *But he that hath sent them will take care to provide them a morsel in due season*; and such as these (though some of them have no more certain dwelling place then the ancient Ministers of Christ had) are made manifest in our consciences, and so far approved and owned as the Ministers of Christ. But for the company of Priests that are made by mans will, and have the Law of a carnal commandment for to uphold their Ministry and maintenance, and claim tythes of mens increase, a thing not mentioned by the ancient Christians; and when for pure conscience sake (and not for any corrupt ends, as our manifold sufferings may evince) we cannot uphold that Jewish custom, and Antichristian practice which hath been introduced in the dark night of Popery, then do they sue us to Law, cast in prison and make spoil of our goods, ordinarily the treble value of what they demanded, but sometimes amounting to the treble treble value of what they said was due, which hath brought such a blot on them, as shall never be wiped off, and manifests them to be such as *Peter* said had hearts exercised with covetous practices, and such grievous wolves as *Paul* said should come, not sparing the flock; therefore we do turn from them to the chief Shepherd, who hath redeemed us from being a prey to them.

Concerning womens speaking.

That Daughters did Prophecie in the Congregations of Gods Num. 11.2 antient people, is evident; for to *Israel* God spoke by, or in *Miriam* Judg. 4.4 in the dayes of *Moses*; and again, he spoke in *Deborah* to *Israel*, 5.6. and judged them by the words of her mouth, who sate under Joel 2.28 the Palm tree for many years in the dayes of *Barack*; and *Joel* said, 29. that vhen God did pour forth his Spirit, Daughters should Prophecie, as vvell as Sons; and one man had four Daughters that

vere Prophetesses in the Apostles dayes, and divers vvomen vvere helpers of the Apostles in the vvork of the Ministry; as is both evident in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the Epistles, vvhere Paul also gave rules how they should Prophecie, saying, *That every woman praying or Propheying with her head uncovered, dishonoureth her head: and where should the woman Prophecie if not in the Church,* seeing the same Apostle commendeth that gift above many for edification of the Church; and faith, that Prophecie serveth not for them that believe not but for them that believe: so that it is evident, that although he did not permit a vvoman to speak in the Church, nor usurp Authority over the man, yet he did permit the Spirit of God to speak in vvomen, as vve do; for vve dare not forbid it, lest in so doing vve should quench the Spirit vvhich they have the Promise of, as vvell as men.

Read
Rom. 16.
1 Cor. 11. 5
ch. 14. 22.

Concerning Superiors and Inferiors, and the honour that is due from the one to the other: Also concerning Titles, Curtesie and Salutation by the way.

In the beginning God did create all Nations of one blood to dwell upon the face of the whole Earth, that they might glorifie his Name and live innocently in love one to another, but since the seed of the Serpent was received in mans heart, that naturally inclines him to pride, violence, and all other foul inormities: we are perswaded that by Gods Ordinance some have a superiority given them for the punishment of evil doers, and a praise to them that do well: As first, the Husband over the Wife. 2. The Parents over the children, the King over his Subjects, and the Rulers over the people, in their severall Countries and liberties: also Masters over their servants, and Mistresses over their handmaids, and to these Superiors we are perswaded by the Lord that there is an honour due from inferiours: and in his Light we do see and know that it consists not in vain Ceremonies wherein there is no service to God or man, such as uncovering the head, and bowing the knee: And therefore the examples of *Jacob* and *Abraham*, though good men, who bowed to *Esau*, and *Abraham* to the *Hevites* a Heathen Nation, will not vvarrant us to bov down and vvorship creatures against our consciences, no wore then their going in to their handmaids vvill vvarrant us to dō the like: neither doth due honour consist in vain complements, vvhich for the most

Acts 17. 16

part are frivolous, fained and hypocritical, as, your servant Sir, I go Sir, &c. but in diligent and speedy obedience to all just commands of Superiors, and in patient suffering under those that are unjust, doth due honour consist, for those children do most honour their Parents, and those Subjects their Prince, which are of good behaviour, temperate, sober, wise, and humble, and do readily obey all their just commands, and patiently suffer chastisement for refusing to obey that which is unjust; and this honour which is due from all Inferiors to Superiors, we do not at all teach any to withhold, and therefore we can with confidence appeal to the consciences of our very enemies and accusers, that we do design to level nothing but sin, wherein we are justified by the Lord, *who will bring down the loftiness of man, and bow the haughtiness of his spirit, and exalt himself alone, as in the beginning, for he is worthy, because he alone is the Lord; and therefore we cannot call any man the Lord*

1sa. 2. 11. besides him, though we know in the world there is Lords many, and one of them we can call a Lord, but not the Lord, nor my Lord, because God is the Lord, and there is none our Lord besides him; and in like manner, we can call some Ladies as the ancient Christians did, yet not any elect Lady, but such whose election we know, and why should we call any my Lady, as he urges, unless by marriage-union we have interest in them? And for such as do any way demonstrate to us that they are of a Noble and honourable spirit, we shall not stick to call them Noble or honourable, as Paul did Fessus and others; but we see they are most degenerate from true Nobility and Christian faith (and so least deserve it) which do so eagerly seek honour one of another, for to such Christ said, *how can ye believe?* rendring that as the reason of their unbelief. And further, a King we can call by that title, and a Father by that title, and those that are our Matters according to the flesh by that title, and every one in their place by such titles as are neither false, flattering, nor blasphemous; but such titles as are so, we cannot give to any, for in so doing God would soon take us away. And for curteousness to all, both to Superiors and to Equals, where is the man or woman among all our neighbours that have been conversant with us, that can justly accuse us, and shew wherein we have not been curteous and amiable to them? unless they count it discourtesie to be reproved for evil, or not to have their persons worshipped, and adored as God, with uncovering the head, and bowing the knee, which is usual when we approach

proach to him in prayer; and if withholding that from men be esteemed discourtesie, let them shew where God commanded it, or the antient Christians gave it, seeing *Mordica* denyed to give it Hester 3.
5.6. (when required by a King) to *Hamman* a person of great place, though thereby he did not only endanger his own life, but the life of all the Jews throughout the Provinces of *Babylon*. And further, if any do judge us not curteous for speaking to them in that language which God and nature hath appointed for distinction betwixt singular and plural numbers, viz. Thou to a single person, whether Superior or Inferior, and You to many; then let them come forth and shew the contrary to be a curtesie commanded, or commended by God or any of his Saints. And for not using divers other vain customs and manners of the Nation in which we live, I know we are accused of discourtesie and unmannerlinesse, as for not using the drunkards custom and manner, in drinking one to another, and pledging those that drink to us, and for not using the ignorant peoples custom and manner, in saying god-even and god-morrow when we meet them, and other things wherein people will not be held guiltlesse for taking Gods Name in vain, and using such words as corrupt good manners, and therefore we cannot be conformable to them, though for it we suffer reproach; Ex. 10. 7. and sure if the Author of that writing with whom I now deal, had met some of Christs antient Disciples, he would have said they had gone by men like a Hog or a Cow (as he saith we do) when they were obedient to Christs command, who said, *salute no man by the high-way*; and the Prophet said, *if any salute thee, answer them not again*. Luk. 10. 4.
2 King. 4.
29. But in all other things wherein we may do any service to God or our neighbours, where is the man that can say we refuse, or are discourteous, or unneighbourly? and from whom have we withholden, either rents, debts, or other customs (as he accuseth us) which in righteous reason and conscience is due? but sure our blamelesse conversation in these things may by this time have stopped the evil surmizings and gainsayings of our adversaries, and therefore I shall commit our cause to the Lord, who I am perswaded will yet more and more plead it, and clear the innocency of those that love him, by the rising of his light which is a faithful witness in all consciences to which we desire more and more to be made manifest; And therefore we desire that all sober people may take heed of receiving false informations against us, whereby both they and we may be wronged, but rather first hear what we declare

clare and hold forth, and then judge of it and us, according to the Light of the Spirit which God gives them, and according to the Scriptures of Truth; and if by true tryal they finde us hold forth or practice that which is contrary to either, let them avoid it, for on no mans conscience would we impose any thing which he cannot freely receive, no more then we would be imposed upon, for it is our principle to do unto all men even as we would be done unto.

*Writ the 24th. day of the second
Month, 1662.*

THE END,

25 SE/60





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